CIRM
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

Memorandum

To: Members of the ICOC
From: Board Governance
Re: Nomination for Appointment of a Board Member to the Grants Working Group
Date: September 25, 2025

The Scientific and Medical Research Funding Working Group ("GWG") is comprised of: 7 ICOC members from the 12 disease advocacy group, 15 scientists nationally recognized in the field of stem cell research or other vital research opportunities (15 of whom shall be designated to serve on each expert review panel), and the Chair of the ICOC.

Appointment
The GWG currently has a vacancy for a Patient Advocate member of the ICOC.

Requested Action: CIRM requests ICOC approval of appointing Marguerite Casillas to the GWG.

Marguerite Casillas, MA
Patient Advocate, Multiple Sclerosis

Marguerite Casillas is a former Senior Vice President of Corporate Communications at Wells Fargo, with experience in communications, strategic planning, technology platform management, operations management, project management, risk management, and research and measurement. Since retiring in 2022, she has focused on high-level volunteer advocacy work in Washington D.C. and California, partnering with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and the American Association of People with Disabilities to urge lawmakers to support people with chronic illnesses and disabilities.

As a member of the MS Society's California Government Relations Advisory Committee, she meets regularly with Society staff and other activists to review pending legislation and determine prioritization of issues for the broader community of MS Society activists in California. Marguerite is also a member of the Research Committee of iConquerMS, an initiative led by people living with MS to advance research and improve the lives of those in the MS community. Marguerite has lived with MS since 2003 and has participated in multiple MS clinical trials and studies since her diagnosis. She also has direct experience with Parkinson's disease–her mother, maternal uncle and maternal grandfather were all diagnosed with Parkinson's.

Marguerite has a bachelor's degree in communications from Stanford University and recently completed a master's degree in Disability Studies from City University of New York (CUNY). She lives with her partner in Berkeley, CA.

CIRM
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

Memorandum

To: Members of the ICOC
From: Gil Sambrano, Vice President, Portfolio Development and Review
Re: Nominations for Re-appointment of Scientific Members to the Grants Working Group
Date: September 25, 2025

Background

The purpose of the GWG is to provide recommendations to the ICOC regarding the merit and funding of grant and loan applications. The GWG evaluates the merit of applications across all five of CIRM's funding pillars in Discovery, Translation, Clinical, Education and Infrastructure. The scope of proposals we receive is very broad ranging from fundamental biology projects to advanced clinical trials across numerous disease areas and fields of study that use stem cell-based approaches, gene therapy and regenerative medicine.

To cover this breadth of expertise, CIRM maintains a large pool of Board-appointed GWG members (currently 269 members) with expertise in many areas including education, fundamental biology, translational research, medicine, product manufacturing, drug development, regulatory affairs, and clinical trials. The pool of Board-appointed GWG members allows us to compose and tailor each review panel to the needs of a specific set of applications. Appointments to the GWG follow a set of requirements prescribed in Prop 71 and Prop 14 including specific durations (terms) of service. The pool of GWG members is in constant flux due to variable terms of service, changes in members' availability, and also changing expertise needs as scientific fields evolve. As such, we regularly bring for your consideration nominations for the appointment and/or re-appointment of GWG members to maintain a consistently active and relevant pool of experts on hand.

Re-appointments

This quarter, we have 3 GWG members whose appointment term is expiring and propose to reappoint. We have provided a brief bio of each member that provides a summary of their research interests, scientific training, and salient accomplishments. All have served two previous terms and we would like to continue to have them available in our pool and benefit from their expertise.

Requested Action: CIRM requests ICOC approval of the proposed re-appointments to the GWG for the indicated terms of 6 years.

CIRM is seeking the reappointment of the individuals listed in the table below. Their updated biographies follow.

Proposed Reappointments to GWG

Last	First	Term	Years	Expertise
Pera	Martin	3	6	Pluripotent Stem Cell Biology; Disease Modeling
Raja	Rajiv	3	6	Biomarker Development, Translational Genomics
Russell	Steven	3	6	Diabetes Research

Martin Pera, PhD
Martin Pera received his B.A. from the College of William and Mary and his Ph.D. from George Washington University, and he undertook postdoctoral training in the UK at the Institute of Cancer Research and the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. He held independent research positions at the Institute of Cancer Research and the Department of Zoology at Oxford University before joining Monash University in 1996. In 2006 he moved to Los Angeles as the Founding Director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at the University of Southern California. He returned to Melbourne in 2011 to become Professor of Stem Cell Sciences at the University of Melbourne and Program Leader for Stem Cells Australia, the Australian Research Council Special Research Initiative in Stem Cell Sciences. He joined the Jackson Laboratory in 2017.

Dr. Pera's research focus is the cell biology of human pluripotent stem cells. His laboratory at Monash University was the second in the world to isolate embryonic stem cells from the human blastocyst, and the first to describe their differentiation into somatic cells *in vitro*. Currently his lab studies the regulation of self-renewal and pluripotency, heterogeneity in pluripotent stem cell populations, and neural specification of pluripotent stem cells. His early work on neural differentiation of human pluripotent stem cells helped lead to the development of a new treatment for macular degeneration, a common form of blindness. He has provided extensive advice to state, national, and international regulatory authorities on the scientific background of human stem cell research, and he has delivered hundreds of commentaries for print and electronic media on stem cell research, ethics, and regulatory policy. At the Jackson Laboratory, he uses human stem cells and mouse models to study the genetic basis of individual differences in the response of the central nervous system to pathogenic mutations or injury, and the laboratory is working on a second generation cell therapy for age related macular degeneration.

Martin Pera has served as a GWG member for 12 years. He has reviewed for Discovery program awards.

Rajiv Raja, PhD
Rajiv Raja is currently an Executive Director in Oncology Translational Medicine at Glaxo SmithKline, where he is a biomarker asset lead for GSK's oncology programs and is leading circulating cell-free-DNA-based biomarker strategies for GSK. Before joining GSK, Dr. Raja was Senior Director of Translational Medicine Oncology at AstraZeneca where he functioned as the biomarker lead for late-stage lung and bladder cancer programs as well as the Head of Translational Genomics Laboratory. In this role, Rajiv is known for his contributions to the

development of ctDNA-based tumor mutational burden (TMB), molecular response (MR) and minimal residual disease (MRD) as biomarkers in solid tumors.

Before joining AstraZeneca, Rajiv worked as Biomarker Lead and Head of Clinical Assays and Technologies at Genentech/Roche where he developed biomarker strategies for antibody-drug conjugate (ADC) programs and led a team of scientists and research associates in developing molecular biomarker assays and next-generation technologies for use in clinical trials in collaboration with partners such as Roche Molecular Diagnostics (RMS) and Foundation Medicine. Dr. Raja received his Ph.D. in Molecular Genetics from Oklahoma State University and post-doctoral training at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has held positions at the University of California at San Francisco, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Arcturus Biosciences, Molecular Devices and Stanford University, and has over 70 peer-reviewed publications and clinical presentations at conferences to his credit.

Rajiv Raja has served as a GWG member for 10 years. He has reviewed for Translational program awards.

Steven Russell, MD, PhD
Steven Russell is Chief Medical Officer of Beta Bionics, Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, and attending physician at Massachusetts General Hospital.

He received a BS in Biochemistry from Trinity University, and a PhD in Biological Chemistry and an MD from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. He completed a residency in Internal Medicine and fellowship in Endocrinology, Diabetes, & Metabolism at the MGH, and a postdoctoral fellowship at the Joslin Diabetes Center. He is an adult endocrinologist and diabetologist with more than 20 years of experience and currently maintains a clinical practice managing diabetes in the outpatient and inpatient settings at MGH on a part-time basis.

Dr. Russell collaborated with Dr. Edward Damiano's group at Boston University to develop a wearable bionic pancreas for automated blood glucose control, testing and refining it over 20 pre-pivotal clinical trials he directed, including in type 1 and type 2 diabetes and cystic fibrosis-related diabetes. He was the Clinical Director for the Insulin-Only Bionic Pancreas Pivotal Trial published in the NEJM in September 2022.

Dr. Russell joined Beta Bionics as CMO in November 2022. The bionic pancreas, now the iLet Bionic Pancreas system, was cleared for use by the FDA on May 19, 2023. As of July 29, 2025, Beta Bionics had an installed customer base of 24,085 users.

Steven Russell has served as a GWG member for 12 years. He has reviewed for Clinical and Translational program awards.